

Los Angeles County
Children's Planning Council
Improving Children's Lives

July 15, 2003

Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**REQUEST TO ADOPT THE CHILDREN'S PLANNING COUNCIL'S
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE TRACKING AND MEASUREMENT OF THE CORE
SET OF SCHOOL READINESS INDICATORS**
(3 Votes)

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Adopt the Framework for Tracking and Measurement of the Core Set of School Readiness Indicators (Framework) that includes Countywide Goals, a core set of school readiness Progress Indicators and a High Priority Research Agenda, as shown in Attachment A of this report.
2. Instruct the New Directions Task Force Department and Agency Heads to identify current programs that affect the Countywide Goals, as a priority, for inclusion in the 2004-05 Children and Families Budget Addendum, develop performance measures for those programs, and identify data sources related to the High Priority Research Agenda.
3. Request that First 5 LA, in consultation with the Children's Planning Council (CPC), and other key partners from the School Readiness Indicator Workgroup, initiate work on the High Priority Research Agenda.
4. Direct that CPC, in partnership with First 5 LA and other key partners from the School Readiness Indicator Workgroup, implement the plan for building countywide consensus around the Framework.
5. Instruct the CPC and the Chief Administrative Office to report back to the Board every six months, for the next eighteen months, regarding progress in achieving these recommendations.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

On November 12, 2002, your Board requested that the CPC, in partnership with First 5 LA, lead a School Readiness Indicator Workgroup (Workgroup) to define a core set of school readiness indicators. You asked that the Workgroup develop indicators that recognize that school "readiness" is a multifaceted concept that includes schools, families, and communities being ready to do their part, incorporates the county's five outcomes of child well-being, and reflects the diverse population of the region.

Your Board also directed that the Workgroup develop a plan for building consensus around the core set of school readiness indicators among key stakeholders.

School Readiness Indicator Workgroup

On January 28, 2003, the CPC and First 5 LA convened the Workgroup and a Technical Advisory Committee to provide input and technical assistance. Attachment B shows the composition of these two groups, which included participants specifically named by the Board plus key stakeholders from the fields of education, research, child care, and child and family advocacy, and community representatives.

The Workgroup was informed by research on school readiness, local and national efforts to develop and use indicators, the expertise of its members, and the CPC and First 5 LA's experience in indicator development and their uses and limitations.

Framework For Tracking Supports that Help Children Enter School Ready to Learn

The Workgroup is recommending a Framework that lays essential groundwork for tracking the "readiness" of schools, families, and communities to assure that every child in Los Angeles County has the best possible preparation for school and for life. The Framework reflects the belief that it is more important to focus on the collaborative efforts of adults to care for, teach, and encourage children, within the diverse communities of Los Angeles, than it is to assess and measure the "accomplishments" of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Children will be ready and eager to learn if adults set the stage for early learning by working together to assure that every community supports the diverse array of families who live there and that every school is ready to meet the needs of the children who will walk through its doors.

This strategic policy Framework:

- Sets Countywide Goals that affirm both the County's five outcomes for children and family well-being (good health, economic well-being, safety and survival, social and emotional well-being, and education/workforce readiness) and the National Education Goals Panel definition of readiness (children ready for school, schools ready for children, families and communities ready to do their parts).

- ❑ Identifies Progress Indicators to track school readiness for children age 5 and under that are concise, practical, strategic, and measurable, and for which data are currently available countywide and by Service Planning Area (SPA).
- ❑ Creates a High Priority Research Agenda that tackles the limitations of available data and establishes a process that, over time, can expand, evolve, and deepen our understanding of what it takes to prepare children for school.

Consensus-Building Plan

The CPC, First 5 LA, and Workgroup members are committed to working together to build countywide consensus around the indicators to galvanize action to ensure that children are provided the services and supports they need to begin school ready to learn. The following highlights a number of activities to achieve this goal.

The **CPC**, through its work with County departments, nonprofit agencies, private institutions, and community-based organization, encourages other organizations and sectors across Los Angeles County to align their work to reflect a meaningful commitment to the five outcomes for children and families. As part of this mission, CPC will incorporate a commitment to the countywide indicators of school readiness.

The **SPA and American Indian Children's (AIC) Councils** have adopted a particular focus on school readiness and school success that demonstrates the power of joint, coordinated action and is providing a vehicle for First 5 LA to engage communities around the subject of school readiness. The SPA and AIC Councils will use the Framework to better understand factors that affect school readiness in their communities and target their efforts to ensure the greatest impact on school readiness countywide.

The **First 5 LA** Commission ratified the Framework in June 2003, and agreed to incorporate it into its Strategic Plan. Each of the major committees of First 5 LA was asked to make recommendations on the implementation of the Framework into key processes (which include the School Readiness High Priority Research Agenda), work with their grantees, and develop media activities to garner support for school readiness.

The **Los Angeles City Commission for Children, Youth and Their Families** will identify the City-sponsored programs that could or do play key roles in school readiness or early learning as part of its children's budget process for 2003-04, and include recommendations to the Mayor and City Council about the City's role in promoting school readiness. It will also consider the Framework and Progress Indicators as part of its review of the City's existing Child Care policy.

The **Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE)** will use the Progress Indicators in selecting the essential elements for their School Readiness Action Plan and develop an internal plan to organize school readiness efforts that encourage

collaboration and communication across LACOE divisions. It will also work with its Head Start Division on a number of areas related to achieving the Countywide Goals.

In April 2003, the **Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)** adopted a motion in support of the county's five outcomes of child well-being and has committed to track the conditions of children and plan services based on relevant and available data. The Early Childhood Education Division will pursue an LAUSD Board Motion to support and adopt the school readiness Progress Indicators. It will also meet with early education administrators regarding the school readiness Progress Indicators and—through the Parent Leadership Institute—engage parents in discussions and strategy planning relevant to the Progress Indicators. The Research and Evaluation Division will use the Framework to inform the development of research designs and evaluation for children age 5 and under.

The **Los Angeles County Policy Roundtable for Child Care** will incorporate the school readiness Progress Indicators—particularly those related to Countywide Goal I, which states, "Families have access to quality child care."—into its ongoing work. In fulfilling its deliverables, the Roundtable will promote the Progress Indicators and contribute, where possible, to the High Priority Research Agenda. The goals of the Los Angeles County Child Care Planning Committee Ten-Year Strategic Plan for Child Development are aligned with Countywide Goal I.

A description of the specific activities that will be undertaken in the consensus-building plan is in Attachment C of this report.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

These recommendations contribute to the achievement of the County Strategic Plan Goal 5: Children and Families Well Being.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

None.

FACTS AND PROVISIONAL REQUIREMENTS

None.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES

The implementation of these recommendations can enhance current services by contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of what it takes to prepare children to enter school ready to learn and succeed, and thus underscores the vital role that County programs play in helping to prepare children for school. Using a common

Framework can help to focus and coordinate the efforts of a diverse array of County and community stakeholders who provide service and supports to families. The data that County agencies gather about the progress indicators will make an invaluable contribution to tracking our collective progress in improving the education readiness of our children.

The Children's Planning Council and First 5 LA express their appreciation to the Board for the opportunity to convene the School Readiness Indicator Workgroup on its behalf and develop these recommendations. We acknowledge the Workgroup members for their commitment and dedication. Their focused, thoughtful effort reflect the kind of collaborative work that is essential to improving the well-being of children and families in Los Angeles County.

Respectfully submitted,



Don Knabe, Chair

Los Angeles County Children's Planning Council

Attachments (3)

- C: Chief Administrative Office
New Directions Task Force
First 5 LA
School Readiness Indicator Workgroup

Children's Planning Council & First 5 LA**Framework for Tracking and Measurement Core Set of School Readiness Indicators****Introduction**

The Workgroup was convened by the Children's Planning Council and First 5 LA to develop a concise, practical, and strategic list of measurable indicators for which data are currently available countywide and by SPA to track school readiness for children ages 0-5. The group began by affirming both the **National Education Goals Panel** definition of readiness (children ready for school, schools ready for children, families and communities ready to do their parts) and the County's set of **five outcome areas** desired for all children (Good Health, Economic Well-Being, Safety and Survival, Social and Emotional Well-Being, and Education/Workforce Readiness). Recognizing the limitations of available data, and the need for a process that can evolve, expand, and deepen over time, the Workgroup adopted a format that includes countywide goals (conditions needed so that young children are ready and eager to learn), progress indicators (available data), and a short-term research agenda (information urgently needed to clarify the context and conditions of early learning).

The Workgroup believes that, taken together, this matrix lays essential groundwork for tracking the "readiness" of schools, families, and communities to assure that every child in Los Angeles County has the best possible preparation for school and for life. The matrix reflects our belief that it is more important to focus on the collaborative efforts of adults to care for, teach, and encourage children, in the diverse communities of Los Angeles, than it is to assess and measure the "accomplishments" of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Our children will be ready and eager to learn if adults set the stage for early learning by working together to assure that every community supports the diverse array of families who live there and that every school is ready to meet the needs of the children who will walk through its doors.

Framework for Tracking and Measurement of the Core Set of School Readiness Indicators Attachment A (contd)

Countywide Goals	Progress Indicators*	High Priority Research Agenda
A. Children are born with healthy birth weights.	<p>1. Newborns with low, normal and above-normal birth weights, by geography and race. (DHS)</p> <p>GOOD HEALTH</p>	Research on the effects of nutrition, stress, infection, smoking, and social support during pregnancy.
B. Children receive preventive health care.	<p>2. Children, 5 and under, whose parents report that they have a regular source of health care. (LACHS)</p> <p>GOOD HEALTH</p> <p>3. Children, 5 and under, who have asthma (who were ever diagnosed and still have asthma). (LACHS)</p> <p>GOOD HEALTH</p> <p>4. Children, 5 and under, who have health insurance. (LACHS, CHIS)</p> <p>GOOD HEALTH</p>	<p>Research on young children receiving needed developmental, behavioral, and mental health care.</p> <p>Research on young children receiving needed dental health care.</p> <p>Research on access to care and service utilization patterns.</p>
C. Children are free from abuse and neglect and thrive in permanent homes.	<p>5. Child abuse and neglect reports to DCFS that result in emergency response services for children 5 and under. (DCFS)</p> <p>SAFETY AND SURVIVAL</p>	<p>Research on the prevalence of child abuse and neglect.</p> <p>Research on the effectiveness of child welfare system response and services.</p> <p>Research on the impact of permanence on the well-being of young children.</p>

Framework for Tracking and Measurement of the Core Set of School Readiness Indicators Attachment A (contd)

Countywide Goals	Progress Indicators*	High Priority Research Agenda
D. Families ensure that children are safe from unintentional injuries.		Research on unintentional injuries to children 5 and under.
E. Communities offer safe places for children to live and play.	<p>6. Children, ages 1-17, whose parents say that they can easily get to a park, playground, or other safe place to play. (LACHS)</p> <p>SAFETY AND SURVIVAL</p>	<p>Research on access to green space, parks, and community-based recreational activities.</p> <p>Research on pedestrian accidents involving preschool and school-age children.</p> <p>Research on environmental health concerns (air quality, lead exposure, etc.)</p>
F. Families have adequate food.	<p>7. Households, below 300% of the Federal Poverty Level, that are “food insecure”—have inadequate resources for food, to the extent that they run out of food or reduce the quality or quantity of the food they eat and buy. (LACHS)</p> <p>ECONOMIC WELL-BEING</p>	<p>Research on early feeding programs and practices, including breast-feeding.</p> <p>Research on healthy weight gain and obesity in young children.</p>
G. Families have adequate financial resources.	<p>8. Children, 5 and under, living in families with incomes below 200% of Federal Poverty Level. (Census)</p> <p>ECONOMIC WELL-BEING</p>	<p>Research on family levels of economic self-sufficiency.</p> <p>Research on families’ savings.</p>

Framework for Tracking and Measurement of the Core Set of School Readiness Indicators Attachment A (contd)

Countywide Goals	Progress Indicators*	High Priority Research Agenda
H. Communities offer affordable housing for families.		Research on access to and availability of affordable, high-quality housing, including the impact on neighborhood stability/mobility for families.
I. Families have supportive networks and are able to find information and assistance.	<p>9. Children, 5 and under, whose parents say it is easy to find someone to talk to when they need advice about raising their child. (LACHS)</p> <p>SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING</p>	<p>Research on families' ability to find information and assistance.</p> <p>Research on the availability of information and resources that families need in local communities.</p> <p>Research on families living in communities with active "story-telling networks" (communities where families can get information on resources through neighbors, community organizations, and local media).</p>
J. Families have access to quality child care.	<p>10. Parents, who report that it is "very" or "somewhat" difficult to find the child care they need on a regular basis. (LACHS)</p> <p>SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING</p> <p>11. Licensed child care spaces as a proportion of the corresponding population. (LACOCC)</p> <p>SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING</p>	Research on the access, affordability, and quality of family child care, child care centers, and preschool programs.

Framework for Tracking and Measurement of the Core Set of School Readiness Indicators Attachment A (contd)

Countywide Goals	Progress Indicators*	High Priority Research Agenda
<p>K. Communities encourage educational attainment for families.</p>	<p>12. Infants born annually to women age 21 and older who have at least 12 years of education. (DHS)</p> <p>ECONOMIC WELL-BEING</p> <p>13. Infants born annually to men age 21 and older who have at least 12 years of education. (DHS)</p> <p>ECONOMIC WELL-BEING</p>	<p>Research on ways that communities can promote education and training opportunities.</p>
<p>L. Families and caregivers interact with children in ways that promote cognitive, linguistic, social-emotional, and physical development.</p>	<p>14. Children, 5 and under, who are read to daily by a family member. (LACHS)</p> <p>EDUCATION/WORKFORCE READINESS</p>	<p>Research on measures used by families and caregivers to assess multiple domains of child development, including the impact of culture and language.</p> <p>Research on the impact of verbal interactions with young children through telling stories or word games.</p>
<p>M. Schools and child care programs promote an environment that is conducive to learning.</p>		<p>Research on learning environments in child care programs and elementary schools including the effects of design and maintenance of space and the qualifications of staff.</p>

Framework for Tracking and Measurement of the Core Set of School Readiness Indicators Attachment A (contd)

Countywide Goals	Progress Indicators*	High Priority Research Agenda
N. Schools, families, and caregivers work together to ensure a positive transition to K-6 education.		<p>Research on families' perception of "welcomeness" at school (i.e., parents are able to actively participate in school decision-making; school staff speak language of the family; the school recognizes and respects diverse cultures and family structures, and children's special needs; etc.).</p> <p>Research on transition from child care to kindergarten.</p> <p>Research on schools' capacity and competence to engage families from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.</p>
O. Communities support families and children with special needs.	<p>15. Children, 3 and 4 years old, who have selected disabilities and are enrolled in special education programs. (CDE)</p> <p>EDUCATION/WORKFORCE READINESS</p>	<p>Research on early diagnosis, treatment, and availability of services for children with developmental disabilities and delays.</p>

* Based on data currently available countywide from the following sources:

DHS—Los Angeles County Department of Health Services

LACHS—Los Angeles County Health Survey, Los Angeles County Department of Health Services

CHIS—California Health Interview Survey, UCLA Center for Health Policy Research

LACOCC—Los Angeles County Office of Child Care

CDE—State of California Department of Education

Progress Indicators that are noted in gray do not currently have data associated with them. Data related to these indicators are either incomplete, available for only some areas/demographic groups of Los Angeles County, or are not currently available.

1. Newborns with Low, Normal, and Above-Normal Birth Weights, by Geography and Race

Goal A : Children are born with healthy birth weights.

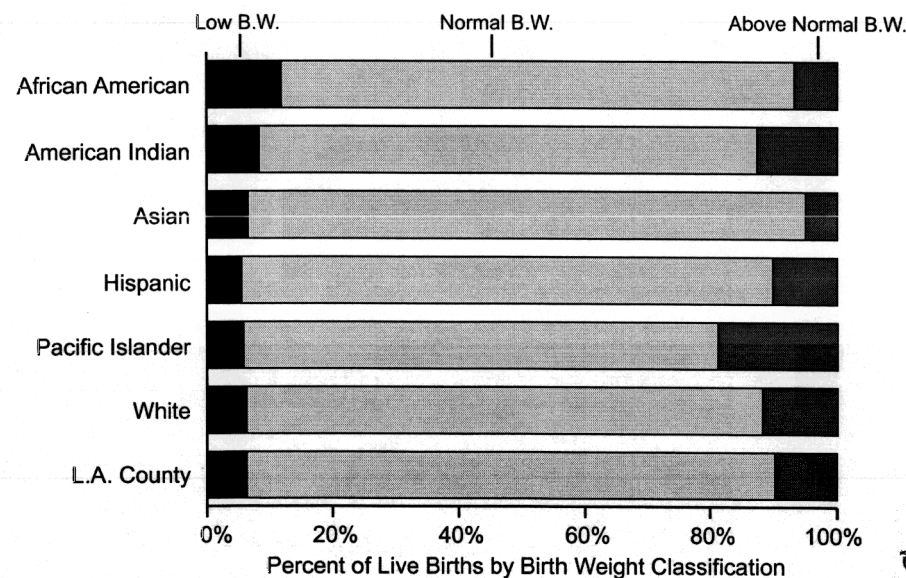
Outcome Area: Good Health

Babies born with low or elevated birth weights (less than 5 pounds 8 ounces, or more than 9 pounds) are at risk for developmental and/or health-related problems that can impact their early learning and later school performance. In L.A. County, more than 25,000 babies were born with low and elevated birth weights in 2000. African American babies, in particular, are at risk for low birth weights, with a rate almost twice that of other racial/ethnic groups. SPA 6, with its large African American population, had the highest rate of low-weight births among SPAs. Elevated birth weight, which can be a precursor to diabetes and obesity, occurs at higher rates in American Indian and Pacific Islander babies. Hispanic and White babies also had higher rates of elevated birth weights than the County as a whole.

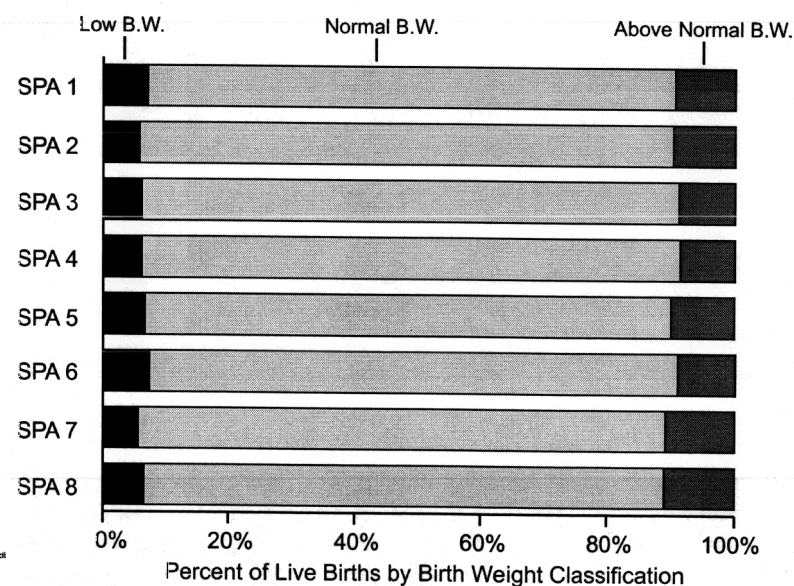
Newborns with Low and Above-Normal Birth Weights

	Low BW	Percent	High BW	Percent
Racial/Ethnic Group				
African American	1,571	12.0%	868	6.7%
American Indian	18	8.4%	27	12.6%
Asian	999	6.6%	759	5.0%
Hispanic	5,478	5.6%	9,887	10.1%
Pacific Islander	32	5.9%	102	18.8%
White	1,859	6.4%	3,438	11.8%
Los Angeles County	10,080	6.4%	15,195	9.7%
Service Planning Area				
1 - Antelope Valley	337	7.2%	437	9.4%
2 - San Fernando	1,757	5.9%	2,899	9.7%
3 - San Gabriel	1,765	6.3%	2,447	8.8%
4 - Metro	1,159	6.3%	1,576	8.6%
5 - West	458	6.8%	665	9.9%
6 - South	1,633	7.5%	1,962	9.0%
7 - East	1,321	5.7%	2,515	10.8%
8 - South Bay/Harbor	1,610	6.7%	2,650	11.0%

By Race/Ethnicity



By Service Planning Area



Source: Los Angeles County Department of Health Services, 2000

2. Children, 5 and Under, Whose Parents Report that They Have a Regular Source of Health Care

Goal B : Children receive preventive health care.

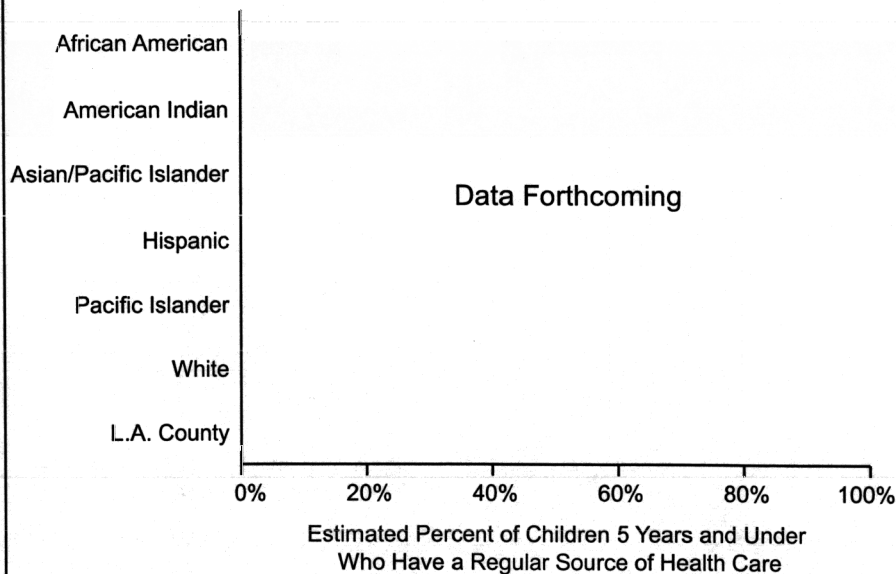
Outcome Area: Good Health

Children who have a regular source of health care are more likely to receive immunizations, well-child visits, and other medical services in a timely manner, thereby increasing their chances of good health when they enter school. A regular source of care also provides children with consistency in the care they receive and helps ensure that their doctor is aware of changes in their health and development.

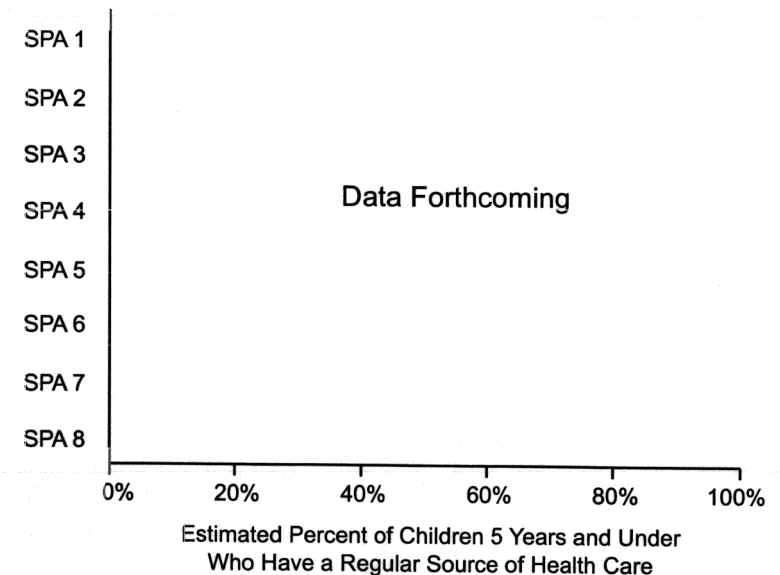
Children, 5 and Under, Whose Parents Report that They Have a Regular Source of Health Care

	Estimate	Percent
Racial/Ethnic Group		
African American		
American Indian		
Asian/Pacific Islander		
Hispanic		Data Forthcoming
Pacific Islander		
White		
Los Angeles County		
.....		
Service Planning Area		
1 - Antelope Valley		
2 - San Fernando		
3 - San Gabriel		
4 - Metro		Data Forthcoming
5 - West		
6 - South		
7 - East		
8 - South Bay/Harbor		

By Race/Ethnicity



By Service Planning Area



Source: Los Angeles County Health Survey, Department of Health Services, 1999



3. Children, 5 and Under, Who Have Asthma (who were ever diagnosed with and still have asthma)

Goal B : Children receive preventive health care.

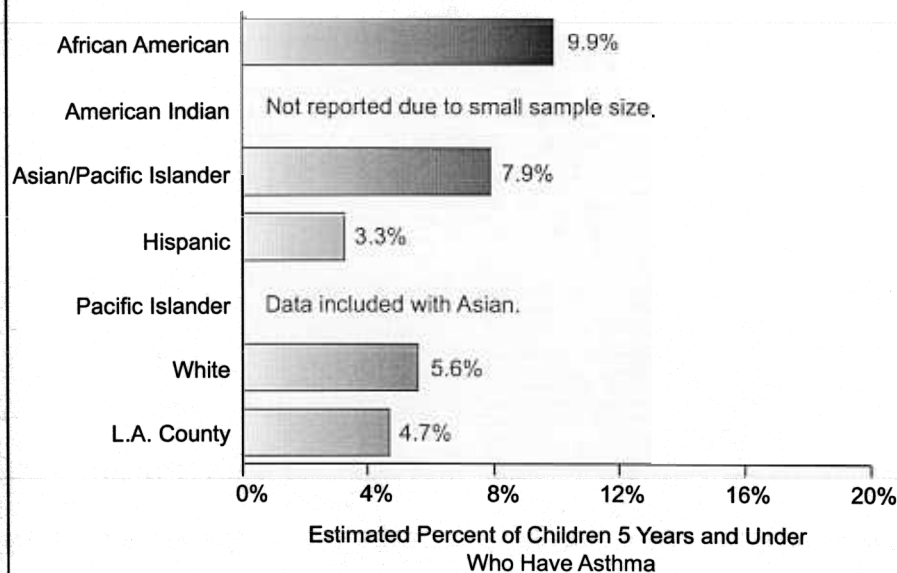
Outcome Area: Good Health

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, asthma is increasing most rapidly among preschool-aged children. Children with asthma often miss school, experience limitations in physical activity, and feel sleepy as a result of nighttime attacks or side effects from medication. This can impact their learning and development. In L.A. County, an estimated 50,000 children under the age of 6 have asthma. African Americans, who account for 20% of these children, have the highest rate of asthma: one in ten, which is more than double the County rate. While Hispanic children comprise the largest number of asthmatic children, it is also important to note that they have the lowest rate, at 3.3%. Geographically, SPAs 3 and 7 have the highest rates of asthma, which may be partially attributed to poorer air quality in these areas.

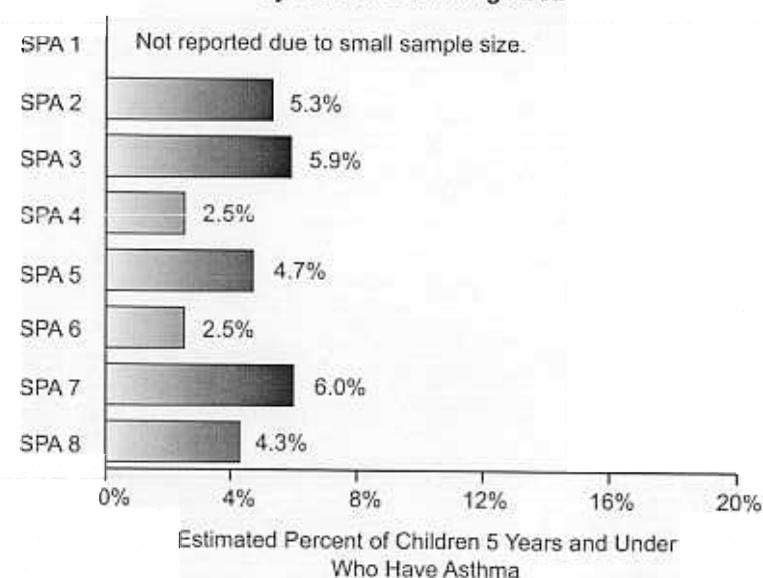
Children, 5 and Under, Who Have Asthma

	Estimate	Percent
Racial/Ethnic Group		
African American	10,000	9.9%
American Indian	n.a.	n.a.
Asian/Pacific Islander	8,000	7.9%
Hispanic	22,000	3.3%
Pacific Islander	n.a.	n.a.
White	11,000	5.6%
Los Angeles County	50,000	4.7%
.....		
Service Planning Area		
1 - Antelope Valley	n.a.	n.a.
2 - San Fernando	11,000	5.3%
3 - San Gabriel	11,000	5.9%
4 - Metro	3,000	2.5%
5 - West	2,000	4.7%
6 - South	4,000	2.5%
7 - East	10,000	6.0%
8 - South Bay/Harbor	7,000	4.3%

By Race/Ethnicity



By Service Planning Area



4. Children, 5 and Under, Who Have Health Insurance

Goal B : Children receive preventive health care.

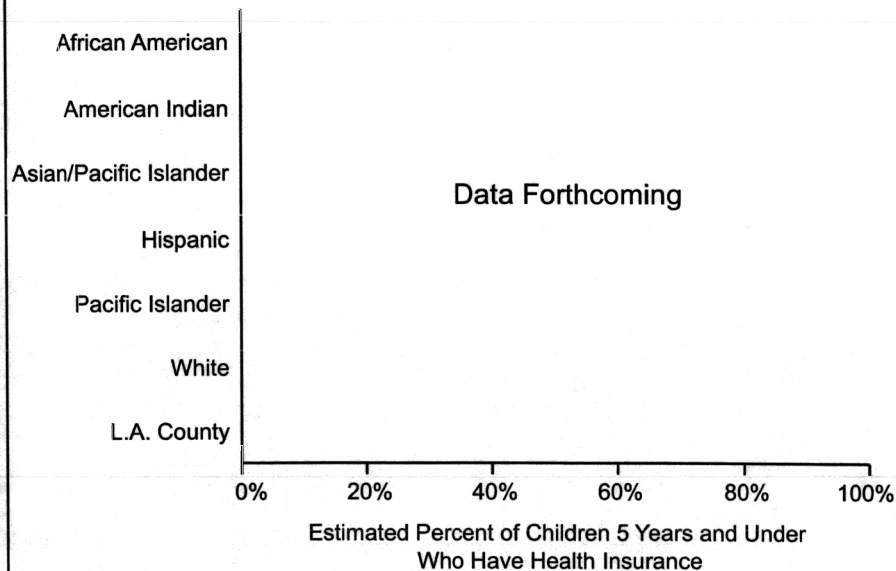
Outcome Area: Good Health

Children without health insurance often experience delays in receiving preventive care and required immunizations as compared to their insured peers, potentially resulting in long-term health problems. Research demonstrates that uninsured children are at an elevated risk for absenteeism and prolonged illnesses, both of which could negatively impact their school readiness and academic achievement.

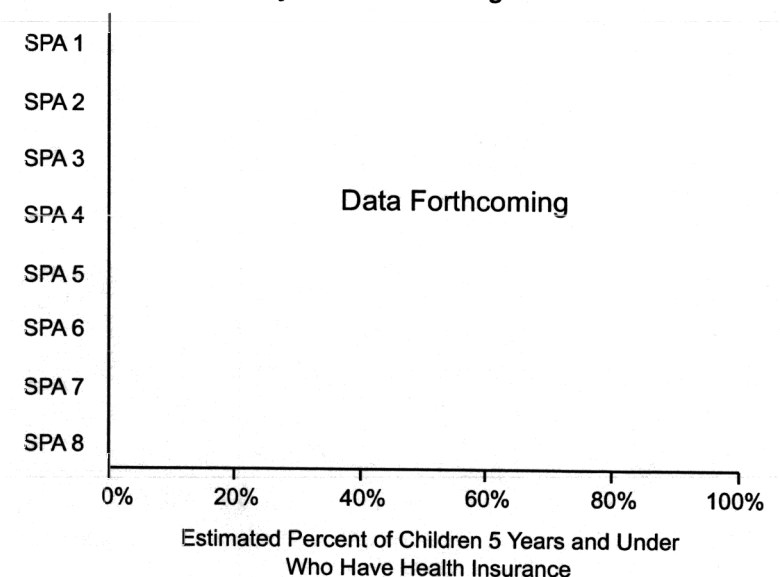
Children, 5 and Under, Who Have Health Insurance

	Estimate	Percent
Racial/Ethnic Group		
African American		
American Indian		
Asian/Pacific Islander		
Hispanic		Data Forthcoming
Pacific Islander		
White		
Los Angeles County		
.....		
Service Planning Area		
1 - Antelope Valley		
2 - San Fernando		
3 - San Gabriel		
4 - Metro		Data Forthcoming
5 - West		
6 - South		
7 - East		
8 - South Bay/Harbor		

By Race/Ethnicity



By Service Planning Area



5. Child Abuse and Neglect Reports to Department of Children and Family Services that Result in Emergency Response Services for Children 5 and Under

Goal C : Children are free from abuse and neglect and thrive in permanent homes.

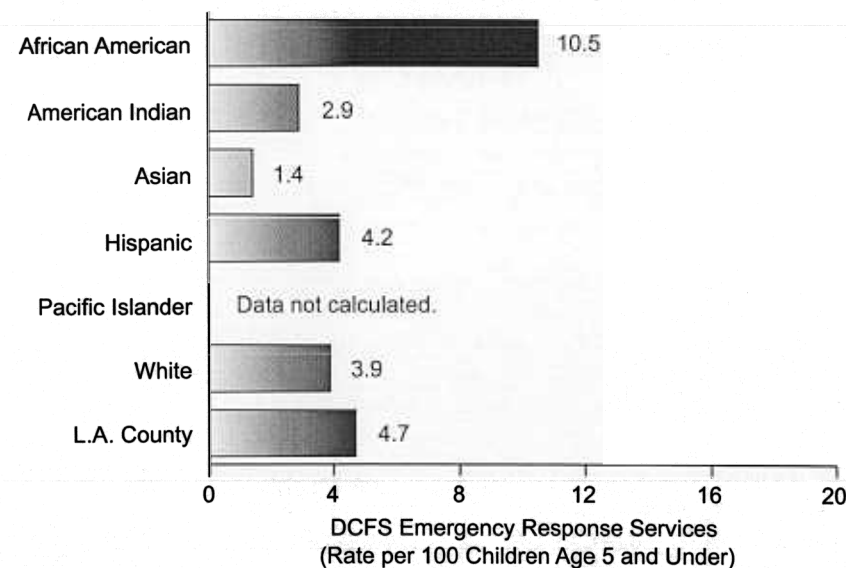
Outcome Area: Safety and Survival

Children from abusive and neglectful environments may experience developmental and behavioral problems that can affect school performance. In 2002, almost 1 of every 20 children living in the County were referred to DCFS and subsequently received Emergency Response services based upon reports of abuse and neglect. A disproportionate number of these children were African American, accounting for 20% of all referrals. The referral rate for African American children, 10.5 per 100, is more than double that of any other group in the County. Correspondingly, SPA 6 had the largest number of referrals amongst SPAs. Hispanic children also have a higher referral rate (4.2 per 100) when compared to other groups, and comprised more than half of the referral caseload. Of all groups, Asian children had the lowest referral rate, 1.4 per 100 children.

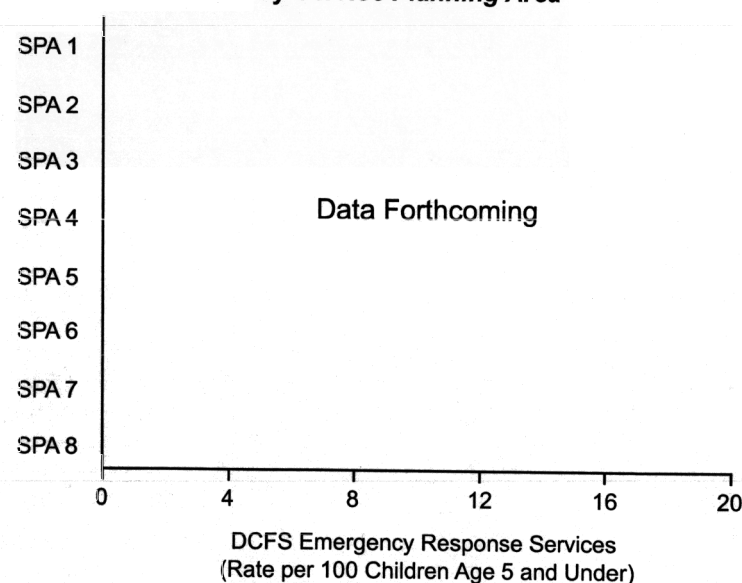
Child Abuse and Neglect Reports to DCFS that Result in Emergency Response Services for Children 5 and Under

	Referrals	Rate per 100 Kids
Racial/Ethnic Group		
African American	8,338	10.5
American Indian	62	2.9
Asian	1,077	1.4
Hispanic	23,806	4.2
Pacific Islander	n.a.	n.a.
White	6,025	3.9
Los Angeles County	42,617	4.7
.....		
Service Planning Area		
1 - Antelope Valley	2,429	n.a.
2 - San Fernando	6,022	n.a.
3 - San Gabriel	5,445	n.a.
4 - Metro	4,572	n.a.
5 - West	960	n.a.
6 - South	6,914	n.a.
7 - East	4,995	n.a.
8 - South Bay/Harbor	5,529	n.a.

By Race/Ethnicity



By Service Planning Area



6. Children (Ages 1-17) Whose Parents Say They Can Easily Get to a Park, Playground, or Other Safe Place to Play

Goal E : Communities offer safe places for children to live and play.

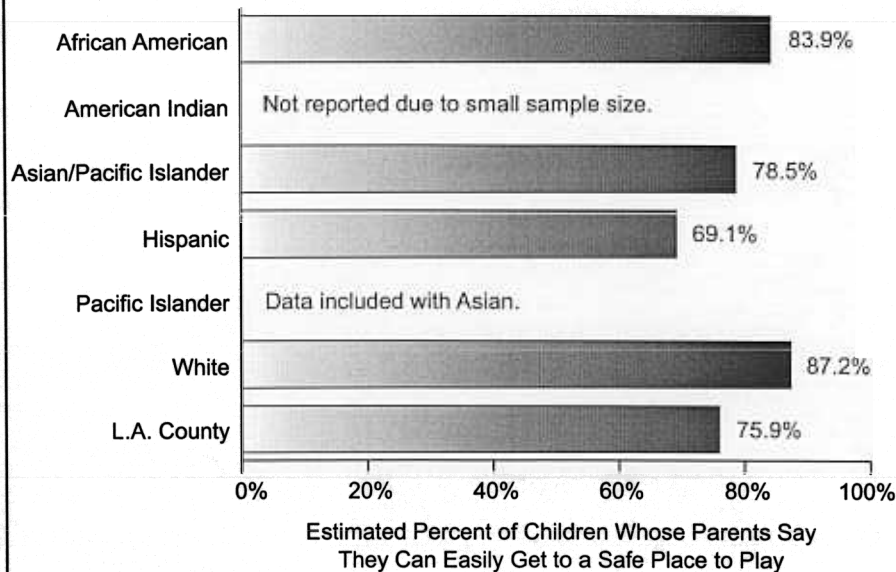
Outcome Area: Safety and Survival

Numerous factors can influence a parent's perception of safe, accessible play areas for their children: neighborhood crime, physical condition of parks, proximity, and availability of transportation may all play a role. Lack of accessibility to a safe play area can limit the ability of children to explore their environment and interact with peers. This, in turn, can impede the development of important social and emotional skills that are linked to school success. In L.A. County, approximately 3 of every 4 families said their children could easily get to a safe place to play. Among Hispanic families, however, the rate was lower: just two-thirds said their children had a safe place to play. SPAs 4 and 6 had the lowest proportions of parents who believed their children had safe play areas (68.4% and 62.9%), while SPA 8 had the highest, at 81.2%.

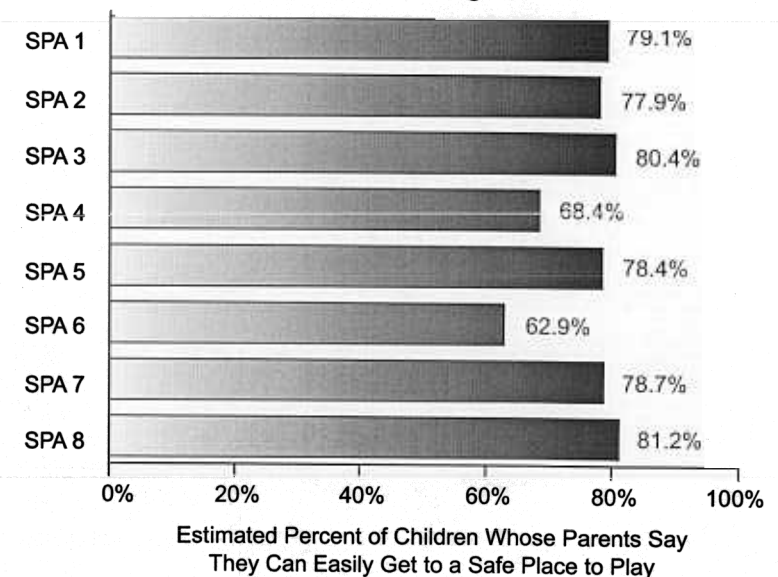
Children Whose Parents Say They Can Easily Get to a Park, Playground, or Other Safe Place to Play

	Estimate	Percent
Racial/Ethnic Group		
African American	231,000	83.9%
American Indian	n.a.	n.a.
Asian/Pacific Islander	197,000	78.5%
Hispanic	1,024,000	69.1%
Pacific Islander	n.a.	n.a.
White	501,000	87.2%
Los Angeles County	1,996,000	75.9%
.....		
Service Planning Area		
1 - Antelope Valley	69,000	79.1%
2 - San Fernando	374,000	77.9%
3 - San Gabriel	406,000	80.4%
4 - Metro	205,000	68.4%
5 - West	83,000	78.4%
6 - South	231,000	62.9%
7 - East	319,000	78.7%
8 - South Bay/Harbor	311,000	81.2%

By Race/Ethnicity



By Service Planning Area



7. Households, Below 300% of Federal Poverty Level, That Are Food Insecure

Goal F : Families have adequate food.

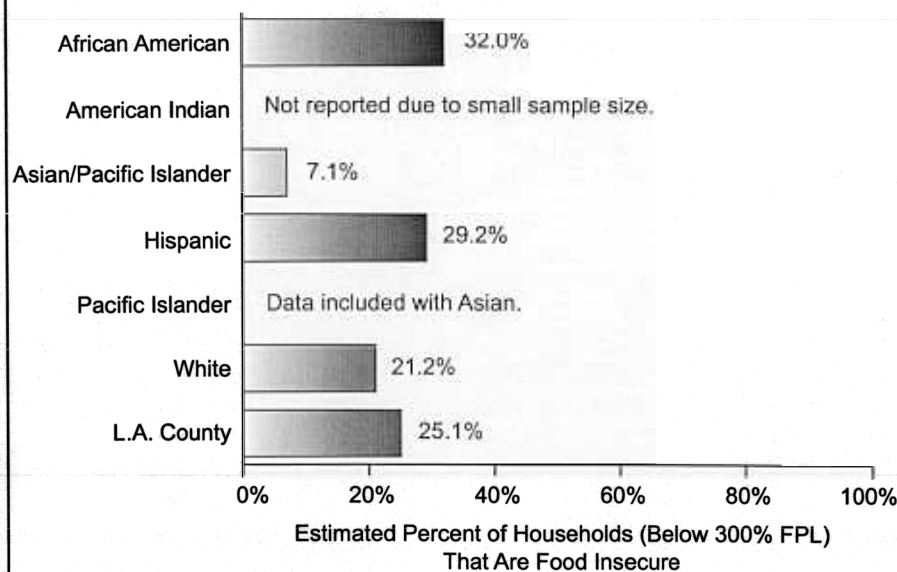
Outcome Area: Economic Well-Being

Good nutrition is an important part of ensuring that children are ready for school. Research demonstrates that a nutritious and well-balanced diet is crucial for appropriate brain and physical development in young children. Families who experience food insecurity, however, are unable to consistently provide nutritious food to their children because they lack the economic resources to do so. In Los Angeles County, 25% of the families with annual incomes below 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (less than \$51,150 for a family of four) experienced food insecurity. Nearly 1 of every 3 Hispanic and African American families in this income category has difficulty accessing nutritious food regularly. This is in stark contrast to Asian/Pacific Islander families, in which just 1 in 14 experienced food insecurity.

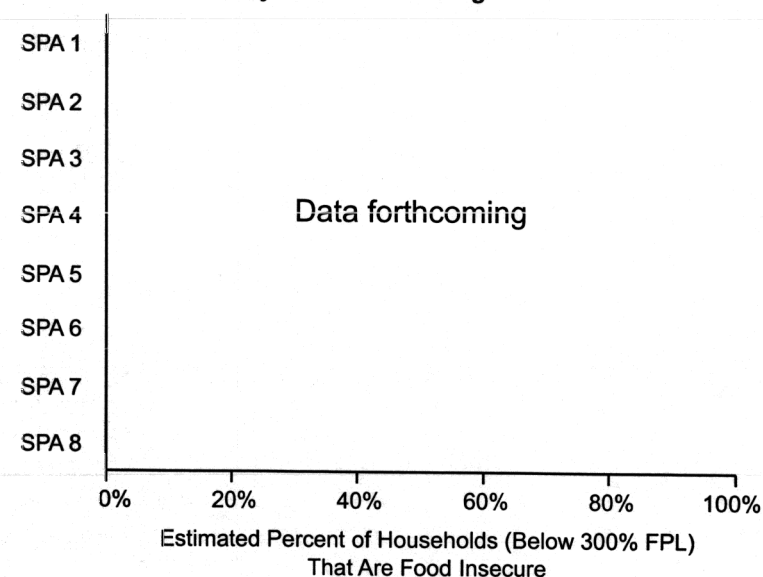
Households, Below 300% of FPL, That Are Food Insecure

	Estimate	Percent
Racial/Ethnic Group	African American	n.a. 32.0%
	American Indian	n.a. n.a.
	Asian/Pacific Islander	n.a. 7.1%
	Hispanic	n.a. 29.2%
	Pacific Islander	n.a. n.a.
	White	n.a. 21.2%
	Los Angeles County	n.a. 25.1%
.....		
Service Planning Area	1 - Antelope Valley	n.a. n.a.
	2 - San Fernando	n.a. n.a.
	3 - San Gabriel	n.a. n.a.
	4 - Metro	n.a. n.a.
	5 - West	n.a. n.a.
	6 - South	n.a. n.a.
	7 - East	n.a. n.a.
	8 - South Bay/Harbor	n.a. n.a.

By Race/Ethnicity



By Service Planning Area



8. Children, 5 and Under, Living in Families with Incomes Below 200% of Federal Poverty Level

Goal G : Families have adequate financial resources.

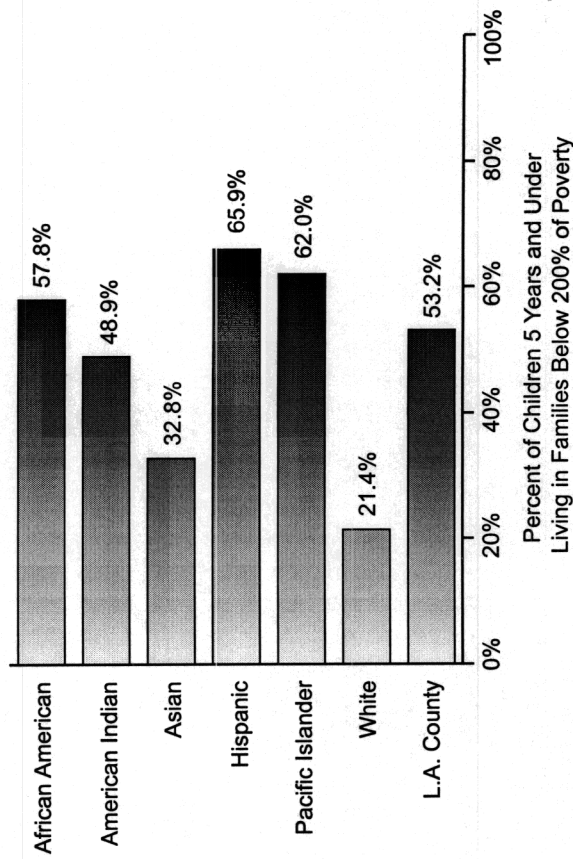
Outcome Area: Economic Well-Being

Research has shown that children who grow up in families with poverty-level incomes may not have the social and emotional supports necessary to ensure their educational success. Many of these children enter school less prepared and drop out in greater numbers. In 2000, a family of four living below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level had an annual income of less than \$34,100. More than half the children in L.A. County under the age of six live in low-income families and thus are at a higher risk for school failure. Notably, three-fourths of these children are Hispanic. Data presented in the Children's ScoreCard reinforces the connection between poverty and school readiness; the SPAs with the highest concentrations of poverty (4, 6, and 7) also had the lowest proportions of third-graders performing at grade level in reading (19%, 12%, and 26% respectively).

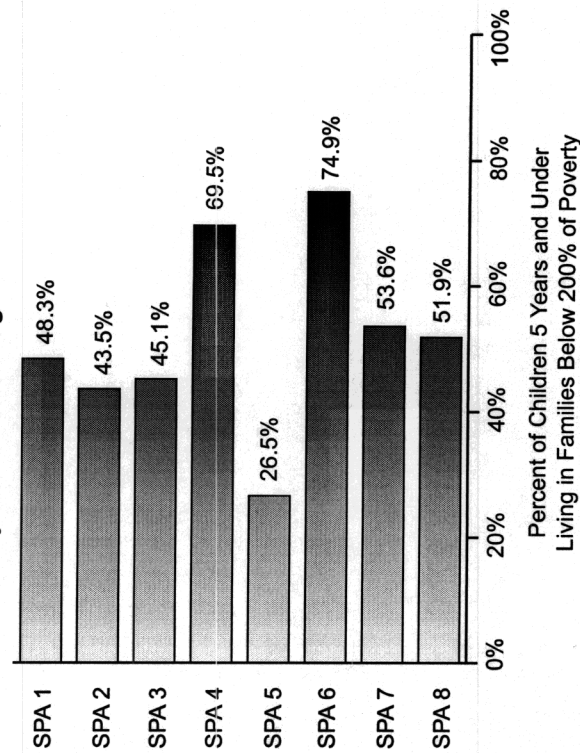
Children, 5 and Under, Living in Families Below 200% of Poverty

Racial/Ethnic Group	Number	Percent
African American	42,667	57.8%
American Indian	858	48.9%
Asian	22,722	32.8%
Hispanic	348,911	65.9%
Pacific Islander	1,607	62.0%
White	33,892	21.4%
Los Angeles County	460,602	53.2%
.....		
1 - Antelope Valley	14,037	48.3%
2 - San Fernando	74,236	43.5%
3 - San Gabriel	67,263	45.1%
4 - Metro	68,345	69.5%
5 - West	9,066	26.5%
6 - South	83,667	74.9%
7 - East	71,397	53.6%
8 - South Bay/Harbor	72,591	51.9%

By Race/Ethnicity



By Service Planning Area



9. Children, 5 and Under, Whose Parents Say It Is Easy to Find Someone to Talk to When They Need Advice About Raising Their Child

Goal I : Families have supportive networks and are able to find information and assistance.

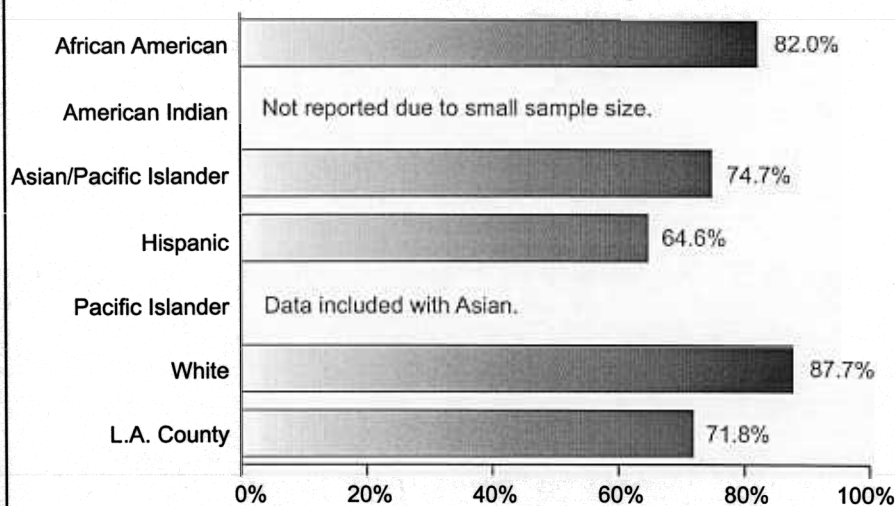
Outcome Area: Social and Emotional Well-Being

Parents who are able to obtain child-rearing support from their friends, families, and communities are better able to cope with the demands of parenthood. As a result, the relationships they have with their children tend to be stronger than those of parents who lack these sources of support. In addition, their children may be exposed to a greater variety of opportunities and experiences that improve their readiness for school. A majority of the parents in Los Angeles County (72%) believe they can easily obtain the advice they need to raise their children. However, only 2 of every 3 Hispanic families say they can easily find someone to talk to when they have a parenting concern. This statistic is mirrored in SPA 4, where parents report the greatest challenge in this regard. Conversely, 9 out of 10 parents in SPA 1 report they can easily obtain parenting advice.

Parents of Children, 5 and Under, Who Say It Is Easy to Find Someone to Talk to When They Need Advice About Raising Their Child

	Estimate	Percent
Racial/Ethnic Group		
African American	78,000	82.0%
American Indian	n.a.	n.a.
Asian/Pacific Islander	71,000	74.7%
Hispanic	422,000	64.6%
Pacific Islander	n.a.	n.a.
White	170,000	87.7%
Los Angeles County	756,000	71.8%
.....		
Service Planning Area		
1 - Antelope Valley	33,000	88.3%
2 - San Fernando	147,000	75.3%
3 - San Gabriel	137,000	73.7%
4 - Metro	79,000	62.0%
5 - West	32,000	73.3%
6 - South	103,000	71.5%
7 - East	112,000	71.0%
8 - South Bay/Harbor	114,000	70.2%

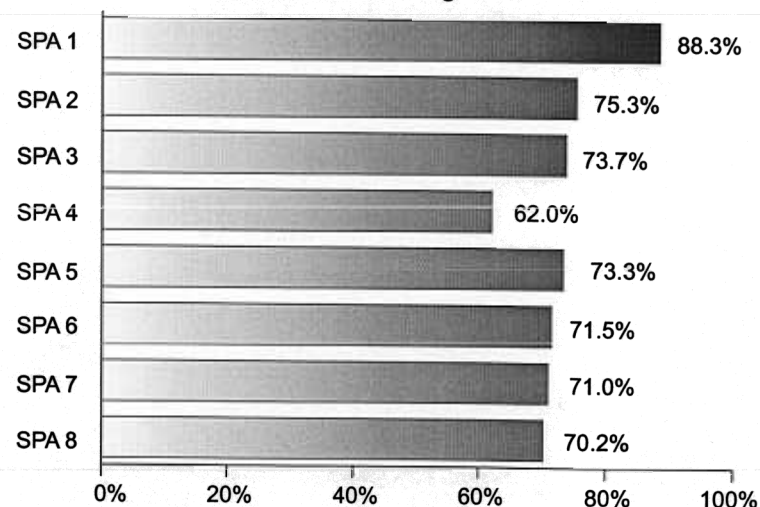
By Race/Ethnicity



Estimated Percent of Parents with Children 5 Years and Under Who Say It Is Easy to Find Someone to Talk to for Parenting Advice



By Service Planning Area



Estimated Percent of Parents with Children 5 Years and Under Who Say It Is Easy to Find Someone to Talk to for Parenting Advice

10. Parents Who Report that It Is "Very" or "Somewhat" Difficult to Find the Child Care They Need on a Regular Basis

Goal J : Families have access to quality child care.

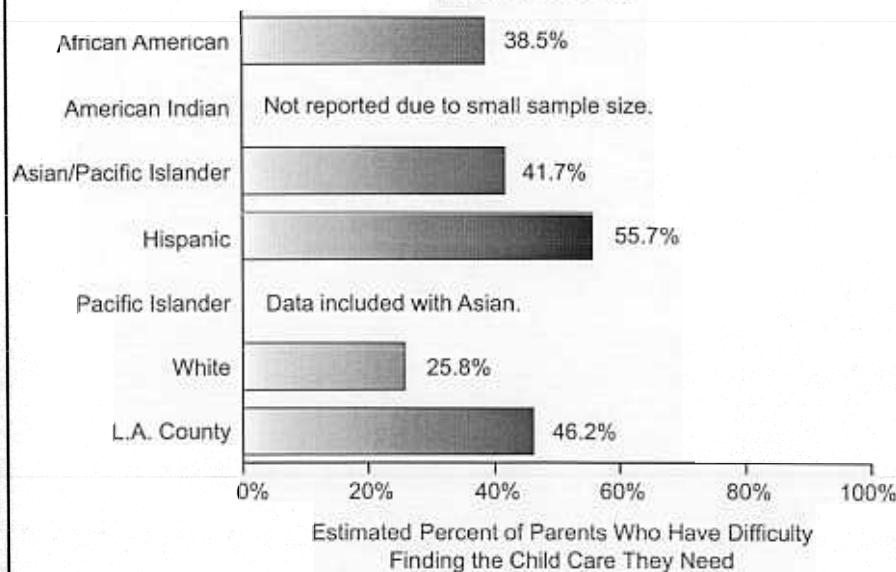
Outcome Area: Social and Emotional Well-Being

Research has shown that the best predictors of positive outcomes related to child care are the attachments that children form with caring and sensitive child care providers, as well as the positive peer interactions they experience. Quality child care can greatly impact the cognitive, language, social, and emotional development of children, enabling them to enter school ready to learn. Even so, almost half of L.A. County parents report that it is difficult to find the child care they need. Reasons for this may include affordability, quality, accessibility, and hours of operation. Among racial/ethnic groups, Hispanic parents reported the greatest challenges in finding child care and account for 71% of all parents who reported difficulties in this area. SPA 8 had the lowest proportion of parents reporting difficulties (38%), which contrasts sharply with 61% of parents in SPA 4.

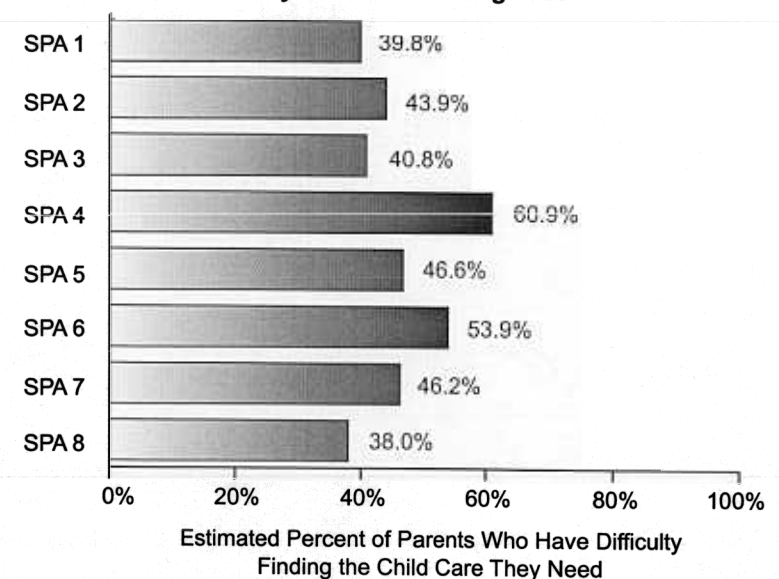
Parents Who Have Difficulty Finding the Child Care They Need

	Estimate	Percent
Racial/Ethnic Group		
African American	36,000	38.5%
American Indian	n.a.	n.a.
Asian/Pacific Islander	35,000	41.7%
Hispanic	291,000	55.7%
Pacific Islander	n.a.	n.a.
White	46,000	25.8%
Los Angeles County	411,000	46.2%
.....		
Service Planning Area		
1 - Antelope Valley	13,000	39.8%
2 - San Fernando	75,000	43.9%
3 - San Gabriel	64,000	40.8%
4 - Metro	68,000	60.9%
5 - West	18,000	46.6%
6 - South	61,000	53.9%
7 - East	60,000	46.2%
8 - South Bay/Harbor	51,000	38.0%

By Race/Ethnicity



By Service Planning Area



Source: Los Angeles County Health Survey, Department of Health Services, 1999



11. Licensed Child Care Spaces as a Proportion of the Corresponding Population

Goal J : Families have access to quality child care.

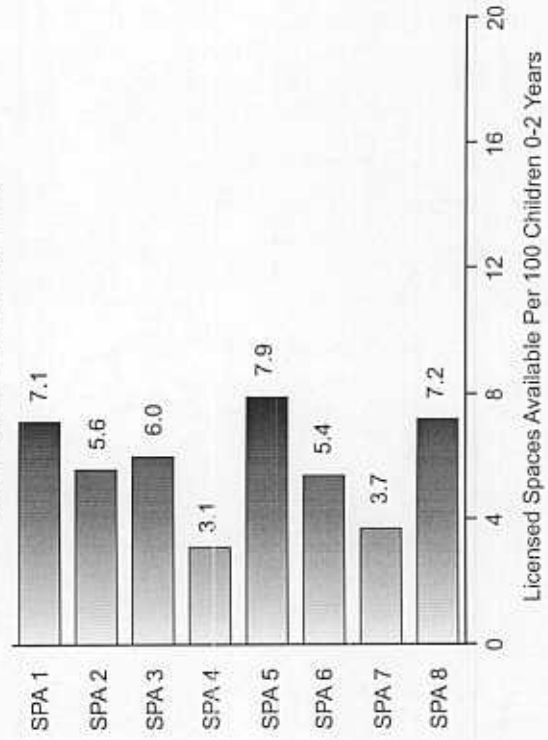
Outcome Area: Social and Emotional Well-Being

Given the changing demographics of our society, with increasing numbers of dual-working and single-parent families, it is more important than ever for parents to have quality child care available for their children. Additionally, kindergarten teachers can identify children who have spent time in quality child care because they enter their classrooms prepared to learn. While not every child needs child care, not one SPA in the County meets the demand of licensed child care for its population. SPA 4 has only 3 licensed spaces available per 100 infants, and only 21 licensed spaces for every 100 preschool-aged children. Even SPA 5, which has the highest ratio of child care spaces for its population, has only 8 spaces available per 100 infants, and 58 (per 100 children) licensed preschool spaces. It is also important to note that this data does not reflect the quality of the licensed child care care facilities.

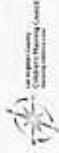
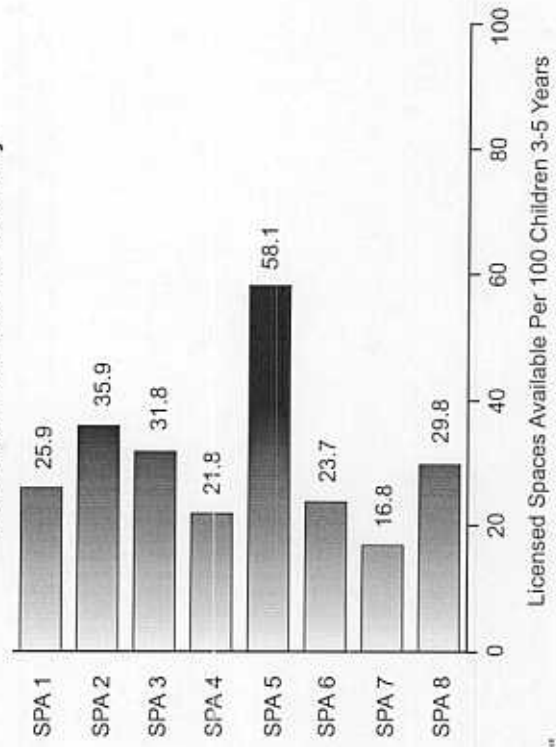
Estimated Licensed Child Care Spaces as a Proportion of the Corresponding Population

Service Planning Area	Infant (0-2 years)		Preschool (3-5 years)	
	Licensed Spaces	Slots per 100 Kids	Licensed Spaces	Slots per 100 Kids
1 - Antelope Valley	1,286	7.1	4,560	25.9
2 - San Fernando	4,823	5.6	29,397	35.9
3 - San Gabriel	4,977	6.0	26,057	31.8
4 - Metro	1,725	3.1	12,438	21.8
5 - West	1,179	7.9	9,023	58.1
6 - South	3,497	5.4	15,078	23.7
7 - East	2,662	3.7	12,013	16.8
8 - South Bay/Harbor	4,607	7.2	19,324	29.8
Los Angeles County	24,756	5.4	127,890	28.2

Infant Child Care Availability



Preschool Child Care Availability



12. Infants Born Annually to Women, Age 21 or Older, Who Have at Least 12 Years of Education

Goal K : Communities encourage educational attainment for families.

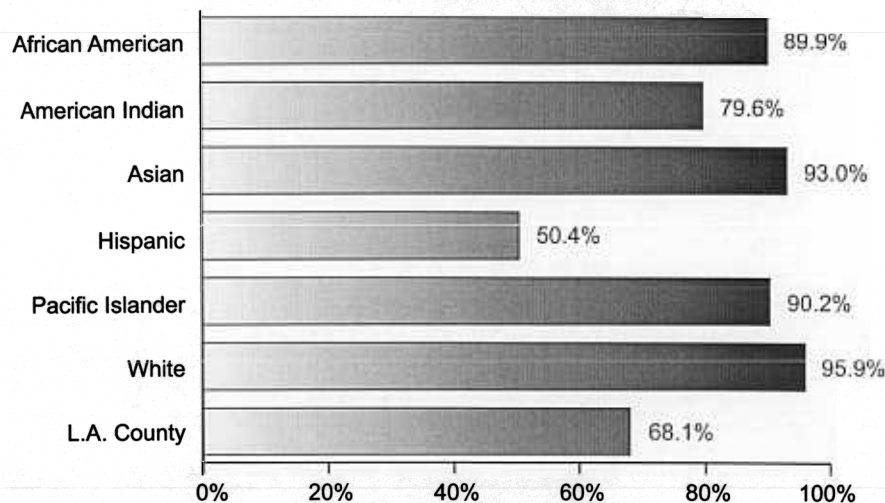
Outcome Area: Economic Well-Being

Research has shown that mothers with lower education levels read to their children less and tell fewer stories than mothers with higher levels of education. Furthermore, the children of mothers with less than a high school education were less likely to have letter recognition and counting skills when 3-5 years of age than children whose mothers had higher levels of education. In Los Angeles County, two-thirds of all mothers who gave birth in 2000 had completed at least 12 years of education. Among Hispanic mothers, the proportion was noticeably lower, with just 50% having completed 12 years of school or more. The next lowest proportion was found in American Indian mothers (80% with at least 12 years of schooling). Disparities were very apparent across SPAs as well, ranging from 48% of mothers in SPA 6 with 12 or more years of education to 91% of mothers in SPA 5.

Percent of Infants Born to Women, Age 21 or Older, Who Have at Least 12 Years of Education

	Percent	
	Racial/Ethnic Group	Percent
Racial/Ethnic Group	African American	89.9%
	American Indian	79.6%
	Asian	93.0%
	Hispanic	50.4%
	Pacific Islander	90.2%
	White	95.9%
	Los Angeles County	68.1%
Service Planning Area	1 - Antelope Valley	76.3%
	2 - San Fernando	73.7%
	3 - San Gabriel	73.7%
	4 - Metro	56.5%
	5 - West	90.5%
	6 - South	48.1%
	7 - East	65.1%
	8 - South Bay/Harbor	73.5%

By Race/Ethnicity

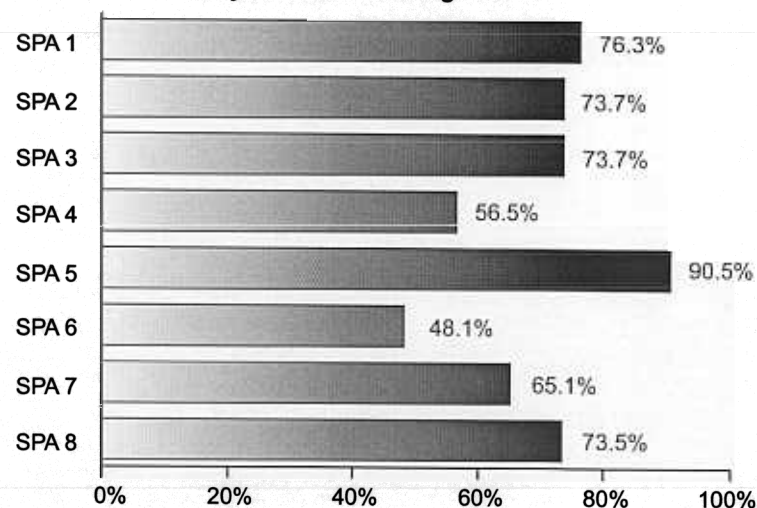


Percent of Infants Born to Women Who Have at Least 12 Years of Education
(excludes births where education level is unknown)



Source: Los Angeles County Department of Health Services, 2000

By Service Planning Area



Percent of Infants Born to Women Who Have at Least 12 Years of Education
(excludes births where education level is unknown)

13. Infants Born Annually to Men, Age 21 or Older, Who Have at Least 12 Years of Education

Goal K : Communities encourage educational attainment for families.

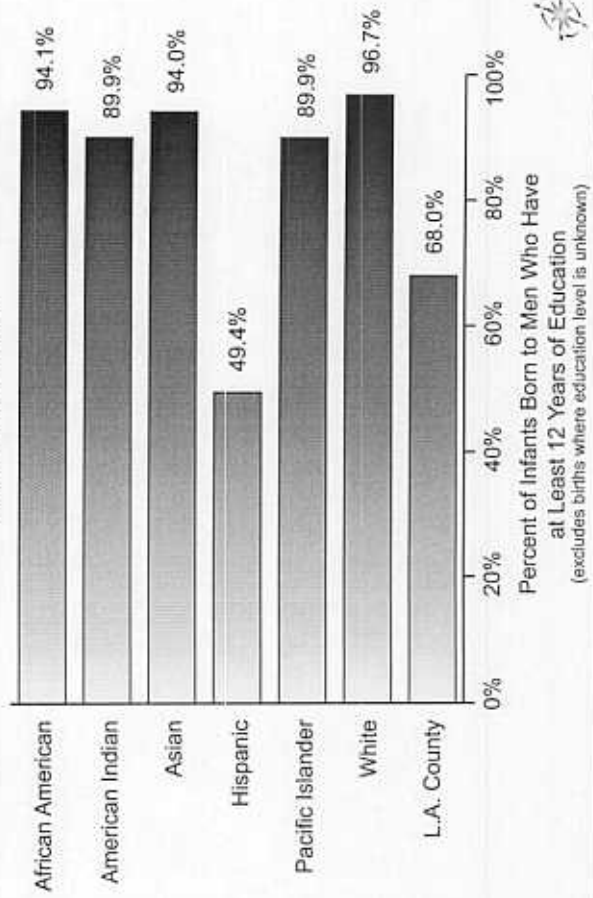
Outcome Area: Economic Well-Being

Studies have shown that one's earning potential is closely tied to educational attainment, with higher levels of education typically resulting in higher incomes. Thus, fathers who have not completed high school face a major economic disadvantage when trying to provide for their families. In addition, they are less likely to support academic achievement or provide academic experiences for their children. Across racial/ethnic groups (with the exception of Hispanic), the proportion of babies born to fathers who had completed at least 12 years of education was fairly constant: 90% or higher. For Hispanic fathers, however, fewer than 50% had finished 12 or more years of school (almost 40,000 babies were born to Hispanic fathers with less than 12 years of education). In SPA 5, 91% of fathers had at least 12 years of education, while in SPA 6, fewer than 48% had finished high school.

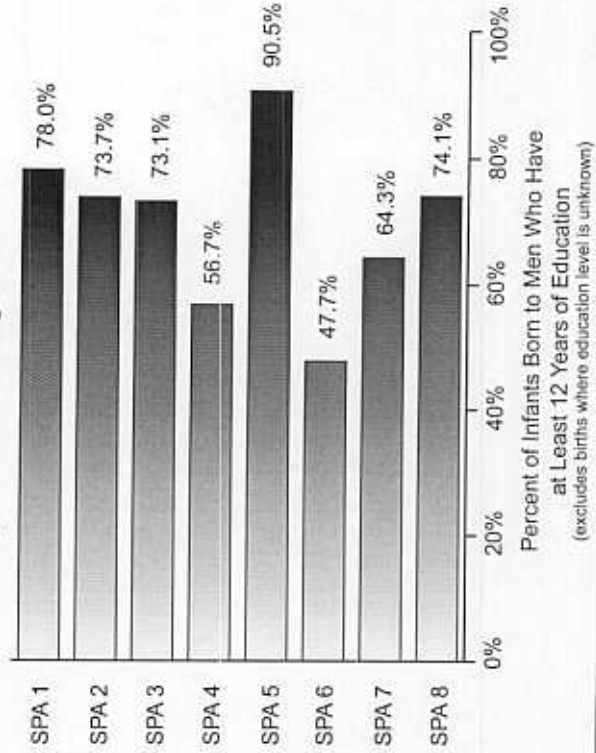
Percent of Infants Born to Men, Age 21 or Older, Who Have at Least 12 Years of Education

Racial/Ethnic Group	Percent
African American	94.1%
American Indian	89.9%
Asian	94.0%
Hispanic	49.4%
Pacific Islander	89.9%
White	96.7%
Los Angeles County	68.0%
.....
Service Planning Area	
1 - Antelope Valley	78.0%
2 - San Fernando	73.7%
3 - San Gabriel	73.1%
4 - Metro	56.7%
5 - West	90.5%
6 - South	47.7%
7 - East	64.3%
8 - South Bay/Harbor	74.1%

By Race/Ethnicity



By Service Planning Area



14. Children, 5 and Under, Who are Read to Daily by a Family Member

Goal L : Families and caregivers interact with children in ways that promote cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical development.

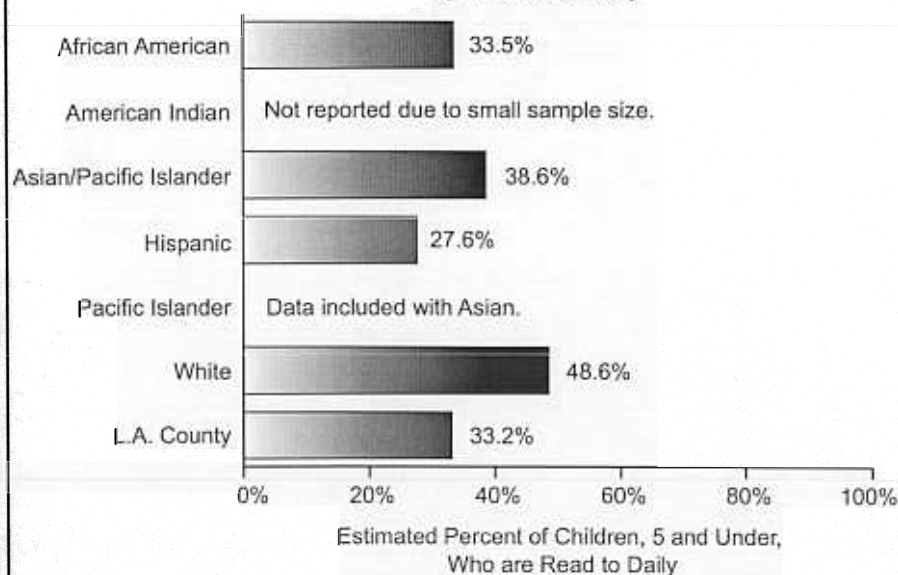
Outcome Area: Education and Workforce Readiness

Through reading and story-telling, parents and children interact in ways that promote the cognitive development and early literacy and verbal skills necessary for entering school. In addition, reading and story-telling promote positive parent/child interactions that bolster the social and emotional development of young children. In Los Angeles County, only one-third of children under 6 years of age benefit from daily reading with a family member. Hispanic children are even less likely to be read to daily; roughly one in four Hispanic children participate in this activity with family members. Percentages across SPAs are low also, with SPA 5 being the noticeable exception. Even so, fewer than 50% of the children in this SPA are read to daily.

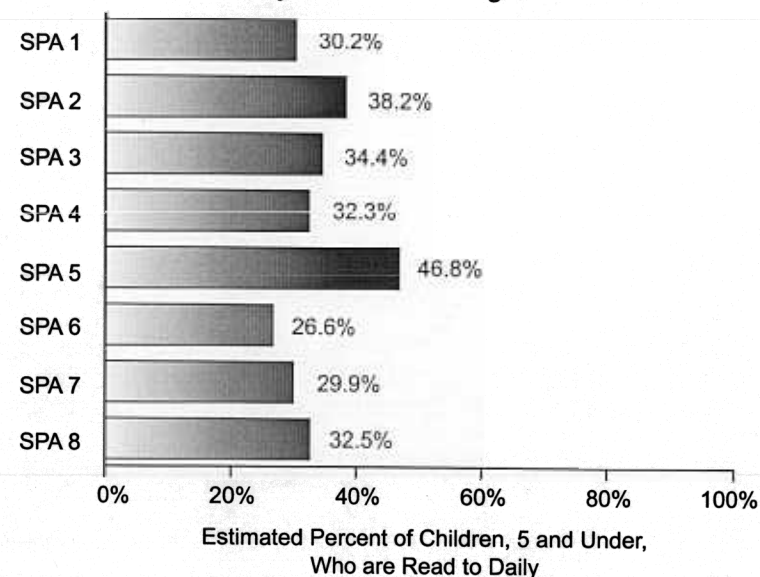
Children, 5 and Under, Who are Read to Daily by a Family Member

	Estimate	Percent
Racial/Ethnic Group		
African American	33,000	33.5%
American Indian	n.a.	n.a.
Asian/Pacific Islander	39,000	38.6%
Hispanic	185,000	27.6%
Pacific Islander	n.a.	n.a.
White	95,000	48.6%
Los Angeles County	358,000	33.2%
.....		
Service Planning Area		
1 - Antelope Valley	11,000	30.2%
2 - San Fernando	77,000	38.2%
3 - San Gabriel	67,000	34.4%
4 - Metro	42,000	32.3%
5 - West	21,000	46.8%
6 - South	39,000	26.6%
7 - East	48,000	29.9%
8 - South Bay/Harbor	53,000	32.5%

By Race/Ethnicity



By Service Planning Area



15. Children, 3 and 4 Years Old, Who Have Selected Disabilities and Are Enrolled in Special Education Programs

Goal O : Communities support families and children with special needs.

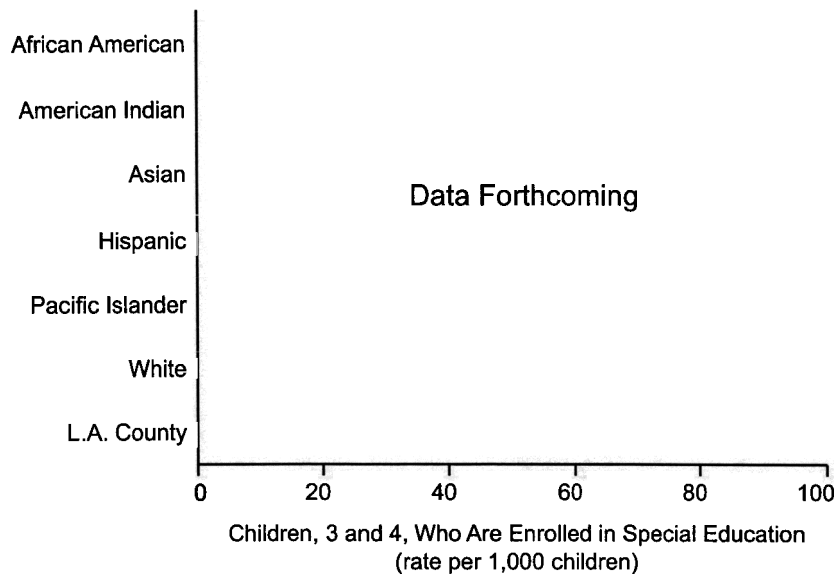
Outcome Area: Good Health

One important way a community can support school readiness is to identify, at the earliest possible moment, children with behavioral, developmental, and learning disabilities. By identifying services and treatment that support these children, communities can ensure that ALL children enter school ready to learn. Furthermore, early identification can reduce the numbers of children that face retention and school failure.

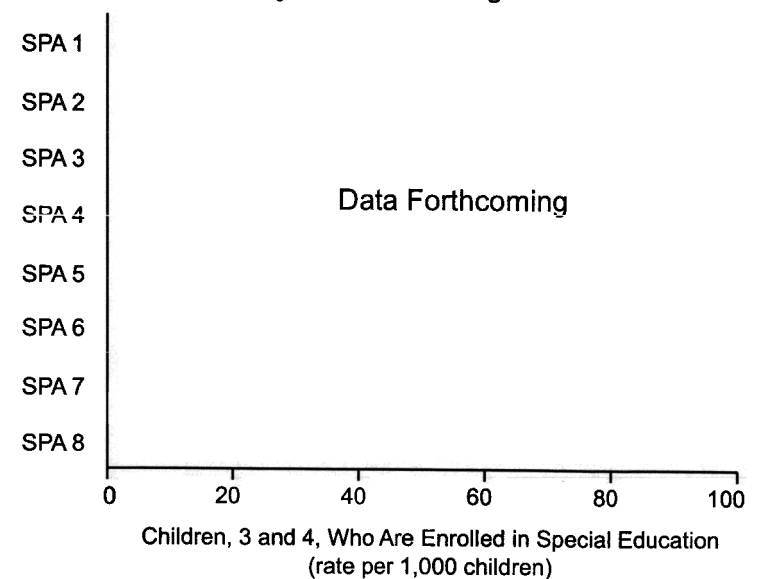
Children, 3 and 4, Who Are Enrolled in Special Education

	Estimate	Percent
Racial/Ethnic Group	African American	
	American Indian	
	Asian/Pacific Islander	
	Hispanic	Data Forthcoming
	Pacific Islander	
	White	
Service Planning Area	Los Angeles County	
	1 - Antelope Valley	
	2 - San Fernando	
	3 - San Gabriel	
	4 - Metro	Data Forthcoming
	5 - West	
	6 - South	
	7 - East	
	8 - South Bay/Harbor	

By Race/Ethnicity



By Service Planning Area



School Readiness Indicator Workgroup Members

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Jacquelyn McCroskey (Co-Chair), USC School of Social Work

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Sandra Guitierrez, Enterprise Foundation
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Building Consensus around the School Readiness Indicators

July 2003 to December 2004

The Los Angeles County Children's Planning Council (CPC)

CPC, through its work with County departments, nonprofit agencies, private institutions, and community-based organizations, encourages other organizations and sectors, across Los Angeles County to align their work to reflect a meaningful commitment to the five outcomes for children and families. As part of this mission, CPC can incorporate commitment to the countywide indicators of school readiness. As such, CPC will:

- ❑ Sponsor symposia to engage additional stakeholders in the discussion around school readiness, such as the Business Think Tank on School Readiness on June 6, 2003), the School Readiness Superintendent's Forum (scheduled for Fall 2003) and a School Readiness Summit for mayors (scheduled for 2004)
- ❑ Recommend that CPC member organizations adopt the School Readiness Indicators
- ❑ Recommend that County Departments develop program performance measures aligned with the School Readiness Indicators
- ❑ Make improvements to the CPC web site incorporating the School Readiness Indicators

Service Planning Area (SPA) and American Indian Children's (AIC) Councils

The SPA and AIC Councils have adopted a particular focus on school readiness and school success that demonstrates the power of joint, coordinated action and is providing a vehicle for First 5 LA to engage communities around the subject of school readiness. As part of their efforts, the councils are currently:

- ❑ Convening Community Knowing Circles to determine developmental "milestones" that community residents and leaders believe are important factors of school readiness
- ❑ Developing frameworks for engaging parents and community members in school readiness activities
- ❑ Mapping existing school-related groups, initiatives, and activities in their neighborhoods
- ❑ Engaging representatives from local school districts in their school readiness efforts
- ❑ Convening conferences on school readiness to affirm their commitment to this effort

The School Readiness Indicators approved by the Board of Supervisors will be used by the SPA and AIC councils to better understand factors that affect school readiness in their communities. This will allow them to target their efforts to ensure the greatest impact on school readiness countywide.

First 5 LA

The First 5 LA Commission ratified the Framework in June 2003 and agreed to incorporate it into its Strategic Plan. Each of the major committees of First 5 LA was asked to make recommendations on the implementation of the indicators into key processes, and will:

- ❑ Incorporate the School Readiness Indicators into their strategic planning process
- ❑ Support activities that address the School Readiness Research Agenda
- ❑ Utilize the School Readiness Indicators to guide new initiatives, programmatic objectives, and grantee reporting
- ❑ Orient grantees on the use of indicators
- ❑ Support information-sharing as it applies to the School Readiness Indicators
- ❑ Support media activities to garner support for school readiness

The City of Los Angeles Commission on Children, Youth and Their Families

The Commission will identify the City-sponsored programs that could or do play key roles in school readiness or early learning as part of its children's budget process for 2003–04, and include recommendations to the Mayor and City Council about the City's role in promoting school readiness. It will also consider the framework and Indicators as part of its review of the City's existing Child Care policy.

Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE)

LACOE will use the School Readiness Indicators in selecting essential elements for their School Readiness Action Plan and develop an internal plan to organize school readiness efforts to support collaboration and communication across divisions within LACOE. In addition, staff will work closely with the Head Start Division to:

- ❑ Expand and promote school readiness efforts to prepare young children to enter school with the fundamental cognitive and social skills necessary to experience school success
- ❑ Explore and design programs that lead to gainful employment and self-sufficiency for Head Start families through programs focusing on education, acquiring English proficiency, and improving health and life management
- ❑ Promote increased achievement for all students with an emphasis on assisting low-performing schools by providing support services and programs to underserved children, youth, families, and communities

Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)

LAUSD adopted a motion on April 22, 2003, in support of LA County's five outcomes of child well-being, and has committed to begin to track the conditions of children across political or administrative boundaries, plan services based on relevant and available data, and align resource allocations to desired results. In addition, the LAUSD Early Childhood Education Division will:

- ❑ Convene meetings with early education administrators to share and receive input regarding the School Readiness Indicators
- ❑ Pursue a Board Motion to support and adopt the School Readiness Indicators
- ❑ Engage parents through the Parent Leadership Institute in discussions and strategy planning relevant to the School Readiness Indicators
- ❑ Adopt an early literacy program which will facilitate school readiness
- ❑ Pursue grants that support school readiness for children in communities with low-performing elementary schools and include the school readiness indicators as an essential component to the grant proposal
- ❑ Continue to network with other LA County school readiness advocates to ensure continuity and strength of effort

Los Angeles County Policy Roundtable for Child Care

The Los Angeles County Policy Roundtable for Child Care will incorporate the School Readiness progress indicators—particularly those related to County-wide Goal I, which states, “Families have access to quality child care.”—into its ongoing work. For the period of 2003–05, the Roundtable will be addressing issues related to quantifying the cost of a fully subsidized, high-quality child care system in the County of Los Angeles that serves infants through school-age children, and researching and recommending a tiered-certification program for use in the County of Los Angeles that reliably addresses the variations in child development program quality, communicates the quality of specific programs to consumers and the public, and assists programs in improving their services. In fulfilling its deliverables, the Roundtable will promote the School Readiness Progress Indicators and contribute, where possible, to the High Priority Research Agenda.

The Los Angeles County Child Care Planning Committee’s Ten-Year Strategic Plan for Child Development is scheduled to be heard and adopted by the Board of Supervisors on July 1, 2003. The following goals of the Strategic Plan are aligned with Countywide Goal I of the School Readiness Indicator Report:

- ❑ Ensure that all families in the County of Los Angeles have access to a sufficient supply of quality early care and education and supervised school-age enrichment options for children from birth to age 13.
- ❑ Ensure that all families have access to quality child care and education and supervised school age enrichment settings regardless of family income

As the Committee coordinates the implementation of its 10-Year Strategic Plan, it will also promote the School Readiness Progress Indicators and contribute, where possible, to the High Priority Research Agenda.

Members of the School Readiness Indicator Workgroup

Members of the School Readiness Indicator Workgroup have agreed to share the indicators with their organizations and look for ways to incorporate the indicators into the work they are currently doing. Specifically, members stated that they would:

- ❑ Share the indicators with staff, partner agencies, community members, and others
- ❑ Use the indicators to guide the development of research protocols and data collection and evaluation models
- ❑ Incorporate the indicators in curriculum and training modules for early child care providers and others
- ❑ Incorporate the indicators into existing planning and delivery efforts for children 0–5
- ❑ Work with current funding streams to incorporate the indicators into their reporting systems
- ❑ Coordinate with outside agencies (state and federal government) to bolster understanding and acceptance of indicators for data collection
- ❑ Develop presentations and outreach strategies designed to inform community members, partner agencies, and others about school readiness and the indicators
- ❑ Inform school district staff and administration of the indicators and their relevance to their work
- ❑ Coordinate with other School Readiness Indicator Workgroup members to share indicators and develop strategies to overcome obstacles that are encountered in the process